

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 7 • Wednesday, November 20, 2002

## Basketball team toppled by EA Sports, 98-94

### All-Stars use strong second half to overcome Aggies

By Michael Crow  
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M men's basketball team surrendered a 12-point lead in a 98-94 loss to the EA Sports Southwest All-Stars on Tuesday night at Reed Arena. The Aggies' most significant struggles came defensively, as they allowed a 64-point second half.

With the loss, the Aggies split a two-game exhibition series and completed preseason play.

Despite a poor percentage from the field, A&M continued to put plenty of points on the board offensively. The majority of the offense came from senior guard Bernard King and junior guard Leandro Garcia-Morales.

The two combined for 53 of the Aggies' 94 points.

Garcia-Morales was one of the few bright spots for the home team, picking up the slack for his struggling teammates.

"Leandro, he came out tonight and he definitely stepped his game up," King said.

Freshman standout Antoine Wright had trouble from the field, putting up only 8 points in the contest. He shot four of 14 from the field and zero for five from behind the three-point line for the night.

"(Antoine) got a little frustrated tonight," King said. "He'll be all right, though. You have games like that some nights. He can do a lot of things for this team."

Wright was finally beginning to find his shot before fouling out late in the second half. The Aggies fought to get back in the game late, but they hurt themselves along the way.

A late offensive run from the Aggies was stopped short, with poor defense and many fouls making for an uphill battle. Head coach Melvin Watkins was visibly frustrated by his team's subpar defensive performance.

"What defense? We never played any," Watkins said. "We didn't shoot the ball well, still scored a bunch of points, but we guarded absolutely no one."

Still, Watkins described the defensive woes as repairable.

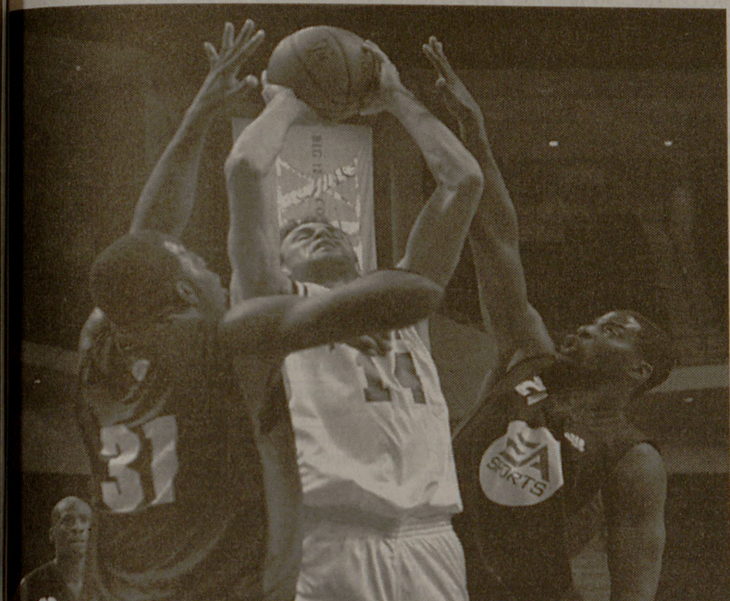
"Our emphasis will be on defending the basketball now,"

Watkins said. "These things are correctable, and we will correct them."

Defensive improvement is a must, as the Aggies' regular season schedule will only get tougher. Watkins is most concerned with the team being prepared for a difficult series of Big 12 matchups later in the season.

"We've got to be ready to play," Watkins said. "We're not going to face any bad teams this year, and all the stuff that we're doing right now is just trying to get ready for the Big 12."

Watkins and the Aggies will look to rebound from a tough night on Sunday, Nov. 26 when they face Texas Southern University in the team's season opener.



J.P. BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Aggie junior Tomas Ressa fights through the EA Sports defense for a shot.

## Women's basketball team hosts NWBL Elite

By Gary Livingston  
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M women's basketball team will play its second exhibition game of the season against the National Women's Basketball League's (NWBL) Elite Team Wednesday at Reed Arena at 7 p.m.

A&M is coming off an impressive 86-66 victory over RTU Klondaika, a Latvian team, that it played last week. In that game, five Aggies scored in double digits with junior forward Janee Derrick leading the way with 17 points.

The NWBL Elite Team is made up of players who have been associated with professional leagues, according to A&M head coach Peggie Gillom. Current Aggies may

recognize one of the players, because she was an Aggie not too long ago.

"One of their players, Brandy Jones, is a former player of ours," Gillom said. "She was a student assistant last year, and she graduated the year before that."

Gillom said practices have been going well since the last game, and things are looking better. As far as a game plan for the Elite squad, Gillom said it is going to depend on some things.

"We are going to go out there and work on the things we need to work on," Gillom said. "A large part of it is going to depend on what they give us."

After last week's game, Gillom said she was happy with the victory, saying it is always good to start the

season off with a victory. She thinks the team did some very good things, but also thinks it needs to pick it up on defense.

"We let a 19-point lead slip away," Gillom said. "But that's because I wanted to see everyone play. I wanted to give them a shot early instead of in critical situations."

Another major concern for the A&M squad is its lack of a true center. The tallest players on the team are the Classen sisters, Lara and Lynn, who are listed at 6'3" and 6'4".

Without a big shot blocker or rebounder in the paint, the Aggies could be looking at a long season. Against RTU Klondaika, the Latvian team exposed the A&M weakness with a 6'6" center who scored 25 points, grabbed 11 rebounds, and

had 8 blocked shots.

"It is an area we're concerned about," Gillom said. "But were just going to have to get better at defending it."

In addition to being reunited with a former player, Gillom will be reunited with her former boss' son. Coaching the NWBL Elite team will be Johnny Chancellor, son of Van Chancellor, head coach of the WNBA's Houston Comets. Gillom was an assistant coach for two years for the Comets from 1997 through 1998. In those two years, the Comets won two out of their four WNBA Championships.

The Aggies are currently 1-0, and after tonight's game will begin regular season play on Nov. 25 against Northwestern State.

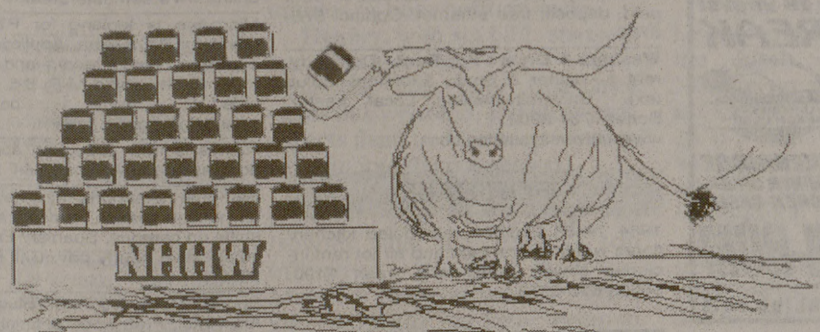


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Aggie forward Janee Derrick shoots over the RTU Klondaika defense on Wednesday at Reed Arena.

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